

*Application No.: 10/677,288*  
*Art Unit: 3676*

*Attorney Docket No. 21593.00*  
*Confirmation No. 9642*

## REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 5, 8 and 9, and cancelled Claim 4. Claims 1-3 and 5-9 remain pending in the present application. Claim 1 is an independent claim.

In the recent Office Action the Examiner objected to the disclosure and Claims 1, 5, 8 and 9 because of certain informalities. Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shepherd in view of Kohout. The Examiner indicated that Claims 4-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claims.

Regarding the objections to the disclosure and the claims of record, Applicant has made revisions to the specification at pages 7 and 9-12, and has amended Claims 1, 5, 8 and 9 to correct the noted informalities in compliance with the Examiner's suggestions. Applicant thanks the Examiner for pointing out these inadvertent errors and his helpful recommendations for correcting the same.

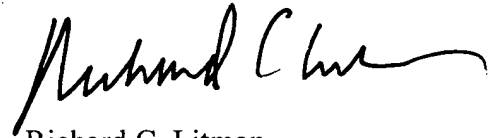
The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In this regard, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 4. The incorporated claim has been cancelled and the dependency of Claim 5 has been changed to now depend from Claim – 1–. Applicant respectfully submits that for at least these reasons, independent Claim 1, as amended, and its corresponding dependent Claims 2, 3 and 5-9 are allowable over the prior art applied of record.

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For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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